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LETTER DATED 16 SEPTEMBER 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 16 September 1991 from Mr. Ahmad Hussein, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq concerning information and testimony from a number of United States officers who confirmed that United States forces buried alive thousands of Iraqi wounded and uninjured soldiers.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdul Amir A. AL-ANBARI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 16 September 1991 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

I am confident that you have read the news that is distressing to every decent human being - the news that was revealed recently and was supported by the testimony of a number of United States army officers and published in the Washington Post on 12 September 1991. The report stated that, on 24 and 25 February 1991, United States forces buried alive wounded and uninjured Iraqi soldiers under tons of sand.

On Friday, 13 September 1991, the White House officially admitted that United States President George Bush had known about the heinous crime committed by United States forces and involving the burial alive of a large number of Iraqi soldiers in their defence trenches inside Iraqi territory.

What doubles the gravity of this barbarous crime against the international conscience is the fact that those who planned it and carried it out claimed and still claim that they were executing their military enemy operations against Iraq under a legitimate cover provided by the Security Council.

This crime constitutes a crude and barbarous violation of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, in particular articles 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17 of the first Geneva Convention relative to armed forces in the field.

On the basis of the above, we call upon you to establish a fact-finding commission to investigate the burial of Iraqi soldiers alive by United States forces during the military operations carried out in accordance with Security Council resolution 678 (1990). This act constitutes a blatant and infamous violation of all international laws and customs, in particular international humanitarian law and even the provisions of resolution 678 (1990) itself.

Silence about the repugnant crimes committed in the name of the United Nations is no longer possible, even inside the United States of America itself. The disclosure of the crime of the burial alive of wounded and uninjured Iraqi soldiers is merely one example of the shocking crimes committed by United States forces, and those who carried it out and those who planned it, and even those who kept silent about it, will be forever accursed.

I am confident that you will take all appropriate measures to investigate the facts on this grave issue.

I should be grateful to receive your reply to our request.

(Signed) Ahmad HUSSEIN
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq

16 September 1991